



Overcoming Pandemic "Languishing"
Cindy & Lynn's 2020/2021 Comfort Reads
2021 KPL Youth Lit Seminar

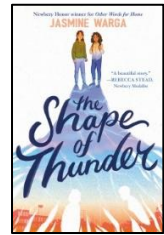
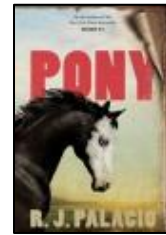
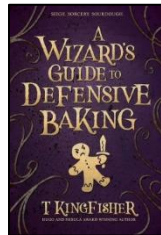
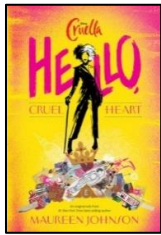
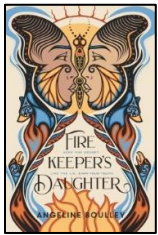
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(E) Elementary (M) Gr.5-7 (J) Gr.7-9 (S) Gr. 9-12

Like many readers we've talked with and heard from online, reading during the pandemic was a struggle for us. We found ourselves searching for comfort books while others were baking banana bread. Here are some of the books that provided diversion or that were so compelling that they pulled us out of our reading slump. We believe they will also appeal to tweens and teens and the adults who work with them.

Fiction



Boulley, Angeline. *Firekeeper's Daughter*. 2021. Henry Holt, \$17.99. (S)

"Daunis, who is part Ojibwe, defers attending the University of Michigan to care for her mother and reluctantly becomes involved in the investigation of a series of drug-related deaths."

Brown, Eli. *Oddity*. 2021. Walker, \$17.99. (MJ)

"The daughter of a murdered physician vows to protect the magical Oddity he left behind--if only she knew what it was--in an alternate nineteenth century where the United States is at war with France."

Caletti, Deb. *One Great Lie*. S&S/Atheneum, \$18.99. (S)

Charlotte's dream of a summer writing workshop in Venice with her favorite author brings the chance to investigate the mysterious poet in her family's past, meet fascinating new people, and learn truths about her idol.

Durst, Sarah Beth. *Race the Sands*. 2020. Harper, \$17.99. (JS)

"In Becar, everyone knows that who you are in this life will determine what you are in your next life. The augurs can read your fate in your aura: hawk, heron, tortoise, jackal, human. Armed with that knowledge, you can change your destiny with the choices you make. But for the darkest individuals, you come back as a kehok, a monster, and you will always be a kehok for the rest of time. Unless you can win the Races."

Jackson, Tiffany. *White Smoke*. 2021. Harper, \$17.99. (S)

"Believing her new home to actually be alive, especially when her brother almost dies, Marigold and her new blended family won't be safe until she brings the truth to light once and for all."

Jean, Emiko. *Tokyo Ever After*. 2021. Flatiron, \$18.99. (JS)

After learning that her father is the Crown Prince of Japan, Izumi travels to Tokyo, where she discovers that Japanese imperial life--complete with designer clothes, court intrigue, paparazzi scandals, and a forbidden romance with her handsome but stoic bodyguard--is a tough fit for the outspoken and irreverent eighteen-year-old from northern California.

Johnson, Maureen. *Cruella. Hello, Cruel Heart*. 2021. Disney, \$17.99. (JS)

"Follows the experiences of a talented teen fashion designer whose shattered dreams lead to her life on the streets alongside amateur thieves Jasper and Horace."

Kingfisher, T. *Minor Mage*. 2019. Argyll, \$12.95. (M)

Oliver was a very minor mage. His familiar reminded him of this several times a day. He only knew three spells, and one of them was to control his allergy to armadillo dander. His attempts to summon elementals resulted in nosebleeds, and there is nothing more embarrassing than having your elemental leave the circle to get you a tissue, pat you comfortingly, and then disappear in a puff of magic. The armadillo had about wet himself laughing. He was a very minor mage. Unfortunately, he was all they had.

Kingfisher, T. *A Wizard's Guide to Defensive Baking*. 2020. Argyll, \$16.99. (MJ)

"Fourteen-year-old Mona isn't like the wizards charged with defending the city. She can't control lightning or speak to water. Her familiar is a sourdough starter and her magic only works on bread. She has a comfortable life in her aunt's bakery making gingerbread men dance. But Mona's life is turned upside down when she finds a dead body on the bakery floor. An assassin is stalking the streets of Mona's city, preying on magic folk, and it appears that Mona is his next target. And in an embattled city suddenly bereft of wizards, the assassin may be the least of Mona's worries."

Larson, Hope. *Salt Magic*. 2021. Holiday House/Margaret Ferguson, \$21.99. (MJS)

Twelve-year-old Vonceil Taggart, willing to risk everything to set things right, leaves her family's Oklahoma farm in 1919 seeking the salt witch who cast a spell that turned their spring to saltwater.

Levithan, David. *The Mysterious Disappearance of Aidan S: (As Told to His Brother)*. 2021. \$16.99. (EMJ)

"Aidan disappeared for six days. Six agonizing days of searches and police and questions and constant vigils. Then, just as suddenly as he vanished, Aidan reappears. Where has he been? The story he tells is simply. . . impossible. But it's the story Aidan is sticking to. His brother, Lucas, wants to believe him. But Lucas is aware of what other people, including their parents, are saying: that Aidan is making it all up to disguise the fact that he ran away. When the kids in school hear Aidan's story, they taunt him. But still Aidan clings to his story. And as he becomes more of an outcast, Lucas becomes more and more concerned. Being on Aidan's side would mean believing in the impossible. But how can you believe in the impossible when everything and everybody is telling you not to?"

Mbalia, Kwame, ed. *Black Boy Joy*. 2021. Delacorte, \$16.99. (EM)

A collection of stories, comics, and poems about the power of joy and the wonders of Black boyhood.

Moke, Jenny Elder. *Curse of the Specter Queen*. 2021. Disney/Hyperion, \$17.99. (JS)

"Sam Knox must use her archaeological skills and her knowledge of ciphers to crack the code of a mysterious diary and outsmart a nefarious brotherhood seeking to activate the curse of the Specter Queen."

Nix, Garth. *Terciel & Elinor*. 2021. Harper/Katherine Tegen, \$17.99. (S)

Sam Knox must use her archaeological skills and her knowledge of ciphers to crack the code of a mysterious diary and outsmart a nefarious brotherhood seeking to activate the curse of the Specter Queen.

Palacio, R. J. *Pony*. 2021. Random/Knopf, \$17.99. (MJS)

"A modern classic about a boy on a quest to rescue his father, with only a ghost as his companion and a mysterious pony as his guide."

Rabb, Margo. *Lucy Clark Will Not Apologize*. 2021. Harper/Quill Tree, \$17.99. (JS)

"Lucy Clark has had it. After being bullied one too many times, Lucy retaliates. But when the fallout is far worse than she meant it to be, she gets sent to Manhattan to serve as a full-time companion to the eccentric Edith Fox. Edith is glamorous and mysterious; nothing like Lucy expected--there's one other thing about her that makes her unlike anyone Lucy has ever met--she thinks someone is trying to kill her."

Schmidt, Gary. *Just Like That*. 2021. Clarion, \$17.99. (MJ)

"Following the death of her closest friend in summer 1968, Meryl Lee Kowalski goes off to St. Elene's Preparatory Academy for Girls, where she struggles to navigate the venerable boarding school's traditions and a social structure heavily weighted toward students from wealthy backgrounds. In a parallel story, Matt Coffin has wound up on the Maine coast near St. Elene's with a pillowcase full of money lifted from the leader of a criminal gang, fearing the gang's relentless, destructive pursuit. Both young people gradually dispel their loneliness, finding a way to be hopeful and also finding each other."

Snicket, Lemony. *Poison for Breakfast*. 2021. Norton, \$17.99. (JS)

"Lemony Snicket investigates his own possible murder after receiving a note under his door stating that his breakfast was poisoned."

Stroud, Jonathan. *The Outlaws Scarlett & Brown*. 2021. Random/Knopf, \$17.99. (JS)

"Scarlett McCain is an outlaw, a bank robber and a sharp shooter--a girl of formidable skills. Fueled by a tragic injustice in her past, she travels the broken kingdoms of England alone, carrying out daring heists in the surviving towns and fending off monstrous beasts in the wilds outside their fortified walls. Her life is dangerous, free, and simple--until she finds a wrecked bus on a lonely road. Albert Browne, the sole survivor of the accident, is a seemingly innocent and harmless youth. Against her better judgement, Scarlett agrees to escort him to safety. This is a mistake. They are soon pursued by men with dogs and guns and explosives. Scarlett is used to running from the law, but these trackers are the most skilled she's ever encountered--and they don't seem to be after her. Just who is this Albert Browne?"

Ursu, Anne. *The Troubled Girls of Dragomir Academy*. 2021. Harper/Walden Pond, \$16.99. (MJ)

"Marya Lupu's parents have always believed that her older brother Luka is destined to be a sorcerer and make the family's fortune, so when the day he is tested turns into a disaster, and the Guild declares that he has no magical talent, they find it easier to blame Marya for upsetting the test than admit the truth, and she is sent to the Dragomir Academy, a school for wayward girls--but a school where she finds friendship and ultimately discovers her own talents."

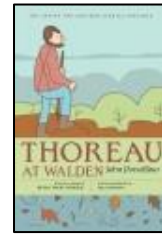
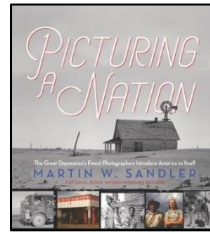
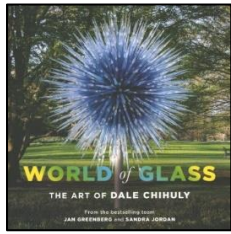
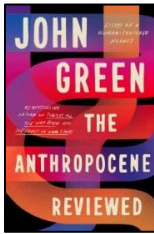
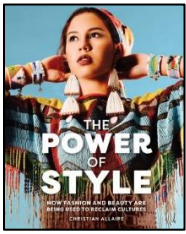
Warga, Jasmine. *The Shape of Thunder*. 2021. Harper, \$16.99. (MJ)

"Estranged from the best friend whose brother killed her sister in a school shooting, a grieving Cora receives a message on her twelfth birthday from her friend, asking for her help with creating a time portal to prevent the tragedy."

Williams, Rita Garcia. *A Sitting in St. James*. 2021. Harper/Quill Tree, \$17.99. (S)

In 1860 Louisiana, eighty-year-old Madame Sylvie decides to sit for a portrait, as horrific stories that span generations from the big house and the fields are revealed.

NONFICTION



Allaire, Christian. *The Power of Style: How Fashion and Beauty Are Being Used to Reclaim Cultures*. 2021. Annick, \$19.95. (JS)

As a fashion-obsessed Ojibwe teen, Christian Allaire rarely saw anyone that looked like him in the magazines or movies he looked to for inspiration. Now the Fashion and Style Writer for 'Vogue,' he is working to change that--because clothes are never just clothes. Men's heels are a statement of pride in the face of LGBTQ+ discrimination, while ribbon shirts honor Indigenous ancestors and keep culture alive. Allaire takes the reader through boldly designed chapters to discuss additional topics like cosplay, make up, hijabs, and hair, probing the connections between fashion and history, culture, politics, and social justice."

Green, John. *The Anthropocene Reviewed: Essays on a Human-Centered Planet*. 2021. Penguin/Dutton, \$25.99.

A deeply moving collection of personal essays from John Green, the author of *The Fault in Our Stars* and *Turtles All the Way Down*.

Greenberg, Jan. *The World of Glass: The Art of Dale Chihuly*. 2020. Abrams, \$21.99. (EM)

"His crew calls him Maestro. Thousands of fans call him a magician. Over the past five decades, Dale Chihuly has created some of the most innovative and popular works of art in museums and gardens around the world. Authors Greenberg and Jordan met with Chihuly in his studio for exclusive interviews discussing his early life, his passion for glassblowing, and his dazzling works. Lavishly illustrated with Chihuly's art and family photographs, this book discusses Chihuly's workshop and his glassblowing technique. The book includes a step-by-step guide to how glass pieces are created, a list of places to see Chihuly's artwork, endnotes, a bibliography, and an index."

Paulson, Gary. *Gone to the Woods. Surviving a Lost Childhood*. 2021. Farrar. \$17.99. (MJ)

"Born into the middle of World War II, Gary Paulsen's turbulent childhood provided plenty of subject matter for his bestselling novels, and the librarians in his life gave him the inspiration and support to explore the world through books. As a soldier himself, his storytelling technique developed, and for the first time he shares his own."

Porcellino, John. *Thoreau at Walden*. 2018. Disney/Hyperion, \$17.99. (JS)

A graphic novel interpretation of Henry David Thoreau's "Walden," told mostly in excerpts from *Walden* in which Thoreau describes his experiment in simple living.

Sandler, Martin. *Picturing a Nation: The Great Depression's Finest Photographers Introduce American to Itself*. Oct. 2021. Candlewick, \$22.99. (MJS)

"In an exquisitely curated volume of 140 full-color and black-and-white photographs, Martin W. Sandler unpacks the United States Farm Security Administration's sweeping visual record of the Great Depression. In 1935, with the nation bent under unprecedented unemployment and economic hardship, the FSA sent ten photographers, including Walker Evans, Dorothea Lange, and Gordon Parks, on the road trip of a lifetime. The images they logged revealed the daily lives of Southern sharecroppers, Dust Bowl farmers in the Midwest, Western migrant workers, and families scraping by in Northeast cities. Using their cameras as weapons against poverty and racism—and in service of hope, courage, and human dignity—these talented photographers created not only a collective work of art, but a national treasure. Grouped into four geographical

regions and locked in focus by rich historical commentary, these images—many now iconic—are history at its most powerful and immediate.”

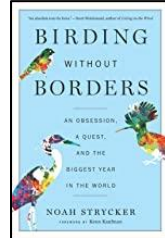
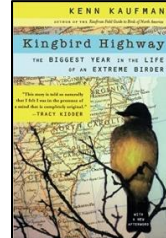
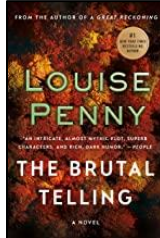
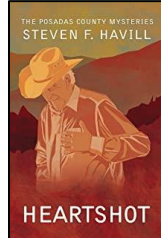
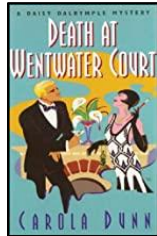
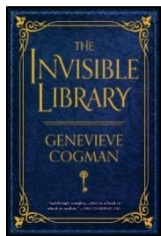
Sheinkin, Steve. *Fallout: Spies, Superbombs and the Ultimate Cold War Showdown*. 2021. Roaring Brook, \$19.99' (JS)

"As World War II comes to a close, the United States and the Soviet Union emerge as the two greatest world powers on extreme opposites of the political spectrum. With communism sweeping the globe, the two nations begin a neck-and-neck competition to build even more destructive bombs and conquer the Space Race. In their battle for dominance, spy planes fly above, armed submarines swim deep below, and undercover agents meet in the dead of night. The Cold War game grows more precarious as weapons are pointed towards each other, with fingers literally on the trigger. The decades-long showdown culminates in the Cuban Missile Crisis, the world's close call with the third-and final-world war."

Wallace, Sandra Neil. *Race Against Time: The Untold Story of Scipio Jones and the Battle to Save Twelve Innocent Men*. 2021. Boyds Mills/Calkins Creek, 17,99. (JS)

Looks at how Scipio Africanus Jones, a self-taught attorney represented twelve African-American men condemned to death after the Elaine Race Riot of October 1919.

Adult Series & Books



Cogman, Genevieve. *The Invisible Library*. 2015. Tor. (Invisible Library series)

Dunn, Carola. *A Death at Wentwater Court*. 1994. Kensington Press. (Daisy Dalrymple Series)

Havill, Steven. *Heartshot*. 1991. Poison Pen Press. (Bill Gastner Series, Posada County Series)

Penny, Louise. *The Brutal Telling*. 2010. Minotaur. (Chief Inspector Armand Gamache series)

Kaufman, Ken. *The Kingbird Highway: The Biggest Year in the Life of an Extreme Birder*. 1997. Houghton, \$16.99.

At 16, Kaufman dropped out of high school and started hitchhiking across America in an effort to see the most birds in a year. "Kingbird Highway" is a unique coming-of-age story, combining a lyrical celebration of nature with wild adventures and some unbelievable characters.

Strycker, Noah. *Birding Without Borders: An Obsession, a Quest, and the Biggest Year in the World*. 2017. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, \$27.00.

Traveling to 41 countries in 2015 with a backpack and binoculars, Noah Strycker became the first person to see more than half the world's 10,000 species of birds in one year.